United Nations E/C.20/2013/3

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 May 2013

Original: English

Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management
Third session
Cambridge, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
24-26 July 2013
Item 3 of the provisional agenda*
Future trends in geospatial information management

Future trends in geospatial information management

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management its report on future trends in geospatial information management, which is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of Experts (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to endorse the background document and to propose a time frame for its revision.

Summary of the report

In its report, the Secretariat seeks endorsement from the Committee of Experts of the background document entitled "Future trends in geospatial information management: the 5- to 10-year vision", which was prepared by a working group established after the first session of the Committee of Experts, held in October 2011. The working group was tasked with considering technological and substantive advances in geospatial and interrelated information infrastructures and providing a strategic vision to address emerging trends over the next 5 to 10 years. A draft of the background document was presented to the Committee of Experts at its second session, held in August 2012, following a global consultation process and an informal workshop conducted in April 2012 by a visioning group established within the working group.

The report summarizes the consultation process and the deliberations undertaken since the second session. The background document provides a detailed analysis of the five broad themes and trends identified by the working group, as follows: technology and the future direction of data creation, maintenance and

* E/C.20/2013/1.

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management; legal and policy developments; skills requirements and training mechanisms; the role of the private and non-government sectors; and the future role of Governments in geospatial data provision and management. The document provides important technical information to guide the future work programme of the Committee of Experts and the preparations by Member States of their geospatial information strategies and plans.

United Nations E/C.20/2013/4

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 May 2013

Original: English

Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management
Third session
Cambridge, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
24-26 July 2013
Item 4 of the provisional agenda*
Global geodetic reference frame

Global geodetic reference frame

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report prepared jointly by the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific and the International Association of Geodesy, which is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of Experts (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the way forward for the international community, under the coordination of the United Nations, to work with all stakeholders to improve intergovernmental coordination for a sustained operational global geodetic reference frame and infrastructure.

Summary of the report

At its second session, held in August 2012, the Committee of Experts recognized the importance of a global geodetic reference frame and the need to maintain national positioning infrastructure, and requested the Secretariat to consult with global experts and to report to it on progress made in that regard. The report describes the outcomes of the consultations held with Member States, including: an informal consultation convened on the margins of the nineteenth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific, held in Bangkok from 29 October to 1 November 2012; a special session on the global geodetic reference frame convened during the second High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management, held in Doha, Qatar, from 4 to 6 February 2013; and a

* E/C.20/2013/1.

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questionnaire distributed to Member States and regional organizations on the present status and role of Governments in adopting and maintaining a globally connected geodetic reference frame. The report provides an analysis and summary of the questionnaire responses received from more than 97 countries and considers a road map for future action for strengthening the global geodetic infrastructure, including identifying pathways for improved infrastructure development and geodetic data sharing.

United Nations E/C.20/2013/5

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 May 2013

Original: English

Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management
Third session
Cambridge, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
24-26 July 2013
Item 5 of the provisional agenda*
Trends in national institutional arrangements in geospatial information management

Trends in national institutional arrangements in geospatial information management

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management its report on trends in national institutional arrangements governing geospatial information management, which is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of Experts (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report, encourage Member States to complete the important baseline survey and express its views on the way forward in addressing and identifying best practices and options for national institutional arrangements in geospatial information management.

Summary of the report

The need to examine institutional arrangements in geospatial information management, and thereby provide Governments with options on how best to create national geospatial entities, arose in earlier discussions held on the issue within the global community. The need to act on the issue was substantiated by findings reflected in earlier documents, such as on the inventory of issues (E/C.20/2012/5), wherein the issue was identified as one of the three most important cross-cutting matters to be addressed, and on future trends in geospatial information management (E/C.20/2012/3). Both documents were considered by the Committee of Experts at its second session, held in August 2012.

* E/C.20/2013/1.

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In its report, the Secretariat puts into context the genesis of the issue, explains why it is important to examine trends in national institutional arrangements and provides supporting evidence based on a recent survey being conducted by the Committee of Experts on the status of national geospatial information management systems in Member States. Although the survey has not yet been completed, an examination of the findings from the more than 50 responses received to date provides initial indicators on the status of the issue and the direction for further work to be undertaken by the Committee of Experts.

United Nations E/C.20/2013/6

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 May 2013

Original: English

Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management
Third session
Cambridge, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
24-26 July 2013
Item 6 of the provisional agenda*
Development of a global map for sustainable development

Development of a global map for sustainable development

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report of the working group tasked with considering the development of a global map for sustainable development. The report is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the development of a global map for sustainable development.

Summary of the report

At its second session, held in August 2012, the Committee of Experts noted the importance of reliable geospatial information in the context of sustainable development, as set out in "The future we want", the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012.

In recognizing the need to provide the information base to inform the sustainable development agenda, the Committee of Experts requested that a working group be formed, comprising Member States, international organizations and the private sector, to guide the work involved in developing a global map for sustainable development. Established in December 2012, the working group initiated a dialogue with the United Nations Initiative on Global Geospatial Information Management at a special session convened to address the issue during the second High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management, held in Doha, Qatar, from 4 to 6 February 2013.

* E/C.20/2013/1.

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In its report, the working group describes the dialogue held in Doha; provides the agreed terms of reference of the working group; introduces an initial road map for consideration; provides a peer review of the existing Global Map project; considers urban hazard and disaster mapping as a key input into the development of a global map for sustainable development; and describes planned activities to meet the needs of Member States and international organizations in developing a global map for sustainable development.

United Nations E/C.20/2013/7

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 May 2013

Original: English

Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management
Third session
Cambridge, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
24-26 July 2013
Item 7 of the provisional agenda*
Legal and policy frameworks, including critical issues related to authoritative data

Legal and policy frameworks, including critical issues related to authoritative data

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management its report on the legal and policy issues to be considered in developing a framework to support global geospatial information management in the public and private sectors, including critical issues related to authoritative data. The report is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of Experts (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the way forward in addressing the issue.

Summary of the report

At its second session, held in August 2012, the Committee of Experts discussed a number of substantive items concerning the need to evolve consistent and transparent policies and laws in areas such as data privacy, licensing, ownership, national security, liability and intellectual property. In its reports on the inventory of issues (E/C.20/2012/5) and on future trends in geospatial information management (E/C.20/2012/3), the Secretariat specifically identified institutional arrangements and legal and policy frameworks as critical issues for the Committee of Experts to address in the coming years.

* E/C.20/2013/1.

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The value of geospatial information is now recognized around the globe, and world leaders are interested in using the data to address such critical global issues as sustainable development and disaster response preparedness. While the geospatial community recognizes that "a location-enabled society" is achievable in terms of the availability of technical tools and methodologies, the legal and policy frameworks required to facilitate the progress of such a society lag far behind.

A recent survey prepared by the Committee of Experts, profiling the status of national geospatial information management systems in Member States (see E/C.20/2013/5), has provided a comprehensive picture of the impact that legal and policy issues have on geospatial information management by Member States. The results of the survey indicate that legal and policy issues pose a challenge to Governments in their efforts to collect, use and distribute geospatial information. The challenge will become even greater as Governments, the private sector, universities, non-governmental organizations and citizens become increasingly involved as both producers and consumers of geospatial information.

United Nations E/C.20/2013/8

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 May 2013

Original: English

Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management
Third session
Cambridge, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
24-26 July 2013
Item 8 of the provisional agenda*
Establishment and implementation of standards for the global geospatial information community

Establishment and implementation of standards for the global geospatial information community

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management its report on establishing and implementing standards for the global geospatial information community. The report is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of Experts (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the way forward for the international geospatial information community, including in considering mechanisms to assist Member States in adopting the existing standards and implementing them in national legal and policy frameworks.

Summary of the report

At its second session, held in August 2012, the Committee of Experts took note of the suggestion by technical committee 211 of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO/TC211) to put forward, jointly with the Open Geospatial Consortium and the International Hydrographic Organization, a proposal on the issues related to standard-setting in the international community (see E/2012/46, decision 2/103).

A preliminary paper, prepared by ISO/TC211, the Open Geospatial Consortium and the International Hydrographic Organization, was presented at the second High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management, held in Doha, Qatar, from 4 to 6 February 2013. It provided background information on the organizations

* E/C.20/2013/1.

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developing standards and their procedures; collaboration on the issue; future areas in standardization; and the trends in information technology that affect standards in the context of global geospatial information management.

The report provides an overview of the range of standards that are available and applicable in the context of the Committee of Experts and highlights areas where contributions can be made to establish and implement standards in order to support the objectives of consistent, standardized and interoperable datasets in national contexts.

United Nations E/C.20/2013/9

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 May 2013

Original: English

Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management
Third session
Cambridge, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
24-26 July 2013
Item 9 of the provisional agenda*
Linking of geospatial information to statistics and other data

Linking of geospatial information to statistics and other data

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management its report on the linking of geospatial information to statistics and other data. The report is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of Experts (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the way forward for the global geospatial information community, including in considering the recommendations of the Statistical Commission; encouraging Member States to participate in the expert group to be established on the integration of statistical and geospatial information; and organizing an international conference on the topic.

Summary of the report

At its second session, held in August 2012, the Committee of Experts discussed an inventory of issues (see E/C.20/2012/5) relevant to a number of national geospatial information authorities and noted that the issue of linking geospatial information to statistics needed to be considered in greater detail.

The Committee of Experts concluded that the mechanisms to support the integration of geospatial information and statistics and other data, in particular through geocoding, did not exist in the global geospatial community in general. As an initial step towards establishing such mechanisms, it was suggested that the Statistical Commission undertake a programme review to support the development of a statistical geospatial framework in national statistical systems.

* E/C.20/2013/1.

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The report addresses the need to integrate geospatial information with statistics and other data; the programme review on developing a geospatial-statistical framework, conducted by the Australian Bureau of Statistics on behalf of the Statistical Commission; and the decision on the issue adopted by the Statistical Commission at its forty-fourth session, held from 26 February to 1 March 2013 (see E/2013/24, decision 44/101). It summarizes the consultations and deliberations leading to the recommendations and proposes points of discussion for the Committee of Experts.

United Nations E/C.20/2013/10

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 May 2013

Original: English

Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management
Third session
Cambridge, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
24-26 July 2013
Item 10 of the provisional agenda*
Critical issues relating to the integration of land and marine geospatial information

Critical issues relating to the integration of land and marine geospatial information

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management its report on critical issues relating to the integration of land and marine geospatial information, which is available from the website of the Committee of Experts (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the way forward in order to facilitate the integration of land and marine geospatial information so that planning, management and solutions can be identified for Member States in a seamless, interoperable and holistic way.

Summary of the report

At its second session, held in August 2012, the Committee of Experts noted the importance of the world's seas, oceans and coastal waters as a significant global resource that was neither well mapped nor integrated with land geospatial information. The Committee of Experts also noted the lack of harmonized land and marine geospatial data and access polices, and the need for closer working relations between land and marine geospatial data creators in Member States. The report, supported by background papers prepared by the International Hydrographic Organization and the International Federation of Surveyors, describes the importance of hydrographic information as a fundamental prerequisite to the development of successful economic and environmentally sustainable human activities; the need for Governments to place greater emphasis on the mapping of the world's seas, oceans and coastal waters; the lack of harmonized land and marine geospatial data access

* E/C.20/2013/1.

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and policies, and the challenges of integrating land and marine geospatial information; and the common existence of non-matching geospatial data sets (topographic maps and nautical charts), resulting from differing vertical datums, symbologies and generalization issues.

United Nations E/C.20/2013/11

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 May 2013

Original: English

Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management
Third session
Cambridge, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
24-26 July 2013
Item 11 of the provisional agenda*
Development of a shared statement of principles on the management of geospatial information

Development of a shared statement of principles on the management of geospatial information

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management its report on developing a shared statement of principles on the management of geospatial information, which is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of Experts (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its view as to whether a shared statement of principles on the management of geospatial information is needed by the global community. The Committee of Experts is also invited to consider the creation of a working group to prepare global definitions and the shared statement of principles.

Summary of the report

At its second session, held in August 2012, the Committee of Experts considered a proposal to develop a statement of ethics for the global geospatial information community (see E/C.20/2012/6). In its decision 2/104, the Committee of Experts noted that a statement of ethics might be too strong, suggested that a shared statement of principles could be a better formulation and requested the Secretariat to consult further and report to it in that regard.

The report provides a review of the issue and introduces the need for a shared statement of principles on the management of geospatial information for the global

* E/C.20/2013/1.

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community, taking into account the discussions held at the national and international levels, including a resolution adopted at the nineteenth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference, held in Bangkok from 29 October to 1 November 2012, in which the Committee of Experts was requested to promulgate a statement of ethical principles for the geospatial information community (see E/CONF.102/8). The report identifies precursory issues to be addressed, such as the need for accepted definitions of what constitutes a geospatial professional and/or a geospatial organization, and the quality of the geospatial data being addressed under the principles. The report also examines the current situation within the geospatial field in relation to the issues and challenges that necessitate a shared statement of principles and suggests guiding principles for discussion and inclusion.

United Nations E/C.20/2013/12

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 May 2013

Original: English

Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management
Third session
Cambridge, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
24-26 July 2013
Item 12 of the provisional agenda*
Activities on geospatial information within the United Nations system

Activities on geospatial information within the United Nations system

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management the report of the United Nations Geographic Information Working Group on activities on geospatial information within the United Nations system, which is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the way forward in considering United Nations system activities on geospatial information.

Summary of the report

At its second session, held in August 2012, the Committee of Experts discussed a number of substantive items that touched upon the need to consider and assess efforts that are being undertaken within the United Nations system, in particular those that are technical in nature and that could contribute to the programme of work of the Committee of Experts, in areas such as sustainable development. The report was prepared in order to inform the Committee about the various technical geospatial activities under way, including those of the Working Group. It will provide the basis for a discussion among Member States on the ways in which the various activities complement and support the programme of work of the Committee of Experts.

* E/C.20/2013/1.

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United Nations E/C.20/2013/13

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 May 2013

Original: English

Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management
Third session
Cambridge, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, 24-26 July 2013
Item 13 of the provisional agenda*
Activities related to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

Activities related to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management its report on activities stemming from the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012. The report is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of Experts (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report.

Summary of the report

At its second session, held in August 2012, the Committee of Experts expressed its appreciation for the active efforts undertaken at the Conference to highlight the importance of geospatial information to the sustainable development agenda, and noted that one of the successes achieved at the Conference was the recognition, in the Conference outcome document entitled "The future we want", of the importance of reliable geospatial information in support of sustainable development.

In acknowledging that efforts to raise awareness of the role of geospatial information must continue, the Committee of Experts requested the Secretariat to report to it on the related follow-up activities it had undertaken since the Conference. In its report, the Secretariat therefore outlines its efforts to reach out to decision makers on the importance of the use of reliable geospatial information and space-technology-based data for sustainable development and to encourage national geospatial information authorities to actively contribute to sustainable development discussions and activities. It also provides an update on activities carried out in the

* E/C.20/2013/1.

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context of using reliable geospatial information for risk assessment and disaster risk reduction instruments, as well as on the major follow-up activities related to the Conference, including the set of stainable development goals currently being established by the United Nations.

United Nations E/C.20/2013/14

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 May 2013

Original: English

Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management
Third session
Cambridge, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
24-26 July 2013
Item 14 of the provisional agenda*
Development of a knowledge base for geospatial information

Development of a knowledge base for geospatial information

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management its report on development of a knowledge base for geospatial information, which is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of Experts (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the way forward for the global geospatial information community, under the coordination of the Committee of Experts, in developing a road map for building a knowledge base for geospatial information.

Summary of the report

At its second session, held in August 2012, the Committee of Experts welcomed a proposal to create a knowledge base for geospatial information (see E/2012/46, decision 2/105). The report summarizes the activities carried out since the second session of the Committee of Experts and outlines the actions to be undertaken to create a searchable repository that can be continuously updated and that will build upon the existing resources of the Committee of Experts website. The report highlights a study of the best practices/case studies compiled by Member States to illustrate the successful use of geospatial information in their organizations; and three survey-based studies, on the status of national geospatial information management and systems, on global geodetic information management, and on the status of mapping in the world. The information collected from the surveys will be used to develop country profiles, good practices and lessons learned in the dissemination and use of geospatial data and will be made accessible through the geospatial information knowledge base.

* E/C.20/2013/1.

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United Nations E/C.20/2013/15

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 May 2013

Original: English

Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management
Third session
Cambridge, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
24-26 July 2013
Item 15 of the provisional agenda*
Status of mapping in the world

Status of mapping in the world

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management its report on the status of mapping in the world, prepared pursuant to the resolution entitled "New study on the status of mapping by country and region", adopted by the ninth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for the Americas, held in New York from 10 to 14 August 2009 (see E/CONF.99/3, chap. VI.B). The report is available from the website of the Committee of Experts (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report and to express its views on the way forward, including by repeating the profiling of the status of mapping in the world; integrating the results with the data analysis obtained from the Committee of Experts questionnaire on the status of geospatial information management; and considering such an activity as an effective tool to monitor progress towards the development of a road map for the work of the Committee.

Summary of the report

A background paper was prepared by the International Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing and presented to the Committee of Experts at its second session, held in August 2012 (see E/C.20/2012/8/Add.1). In its background paper, the International Society discusses the survey-based study that had been carried out with its support and that involved all the national geospatial information authorities in the world.

* E/C.20/2013/1.

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The report sets out the main objective of the study, the responses collected from countries and the main findings on national mapping activities. It is supported by the background paper, which also provides a complete data analysis of the key trends, issues and gaps in the status of mapping and geospatial information. The information collected will be used to develop country profiles, good practices and lessons learned in the collection and use of geospatial data through the geospatial information knowledge base.

United Nations E/C.20/2013/16

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 May 2013

Original: English

Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management
Third session
Cambridge, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
24-26 July 2013
Item 16 of the provisional agenda*
Reports by regional entities and thematic groups

Reports by regional entities and thematic groups

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat has the honour to bring to the attention of the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management its report on the regional and thematic activities and achievements of the six entities referred to below. The report is available in the language of submission only from the website of the Committee of Experts (http://ggim.un.org/ggim_committee.html). The Committee of Experts is invited to take note of the report.

Summary of the report

The report provides information on the regional and thematic activities and achievements of the following six entities: the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific; the Permanent Committee for Geospatial Data Infrastructure of the Americas; the Committee on Development Information, Science and Technology of the Economic Commission for Africa; the Preparatory Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information for Europe; the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Arab States; and the Joint Board of Geospatial Information Societies.

In its report, the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific describes the activities it has undertaken since the Nineteenth United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Pacific, convened in Bangkok from 29 October to 1 November 2012. The Regional Committee was renamed during that time, and three new working groups were established on: (a) a geodetic reference framework for

* E/C.20/2013/1.

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sustainable development; (b) data sharing and integration for disaster management; and (c) place-based information management for economic growth. The Regional Committee also highlights its coordinating efforts with the Committee of Experts and covers the priority issues and challenges in the Asia-Pacific region that should be discussed and addressed in the global context.

In its report, the Permanent Committee for Geospatial Data Infrastructure of the Americas describes the activities and achievements of its working group, based on its 2009-2013 workplan. It also provides an overview of the progress of work under the following seven thematic areas: (a) institutional capacity-building; (b) planning, standards and technical specifications; (c) best practices and guidelines for the development of spatial data infrastructures; (d) innovations in national geospatial information authorities; (e) knowledge gathering on topics relevant to spatial data infrastructures for the region; (f) assessment of the status of developments in spatial data infrastructures in the Americas; and (g) technological means for access to and dissemination of geospatial data.

In its report, the Committee on Development Information, Science and Technology of the Economic Commission for Africa describes actions taken as follow-up to the Addis Ababa Declaration on Geospatial Information Management and other activities considered as being of interest to Member States and stakeholders. The activities focused on policy issues: technical issues; capacity-building; and international cooperation and liaison efforts. In particular, mention is made of an expert group meeting that was held to set the stage for preparing a framework on facilitating the legal and regulatory aspects of geospatial information utilization in Africa.

In its report, the Preparatory Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information for Europe describes the preliminary steps taken towards the creation of a regional committee of United Nations global geospatial information for Europe. The Preparatory Committee comprises representatives of Member States, European Union institutions and existing European umbrella organizations having a specific interest in the subject. It is the intention of the Preparatory Committee to work with Member States towards the creation of a regional committee in the second quarter of 2014.

In its report, submitted on behalf of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Arab States, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) describes the outcomes of a seminar on regional cooperation in geospatial information management that was held in Doha, Qatar, on 7 February 2013, on the margins of the second High-level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management. At the seminar, Member States agreed on and endorsed the need to establish a regional committee on global geospatial information management, with support from the ESCWA secretariat and to discuss and advance the regional interests of the Committee of Experts. It also describes the process to be adopted towards establishment of the Regional Committee and the plans for future activities in the region.

In its report, the Joint Board of Geospatial Information Societies describes the recent activities of its member organizations, including their recent advances in technologies, methodologies and standards. It also describes the future activities of Joint Board member organizations in supporting and developing the needed skills and information resources required to facilitate the timely and efficient collection, management, assessment, monitoring, representation and provision of global geospatial information for the United Nations global geospatial information management community.